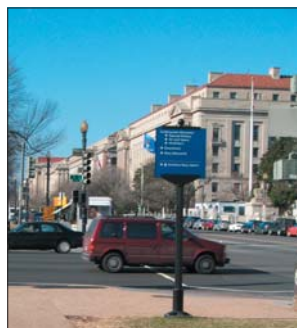




Quality Design and Development



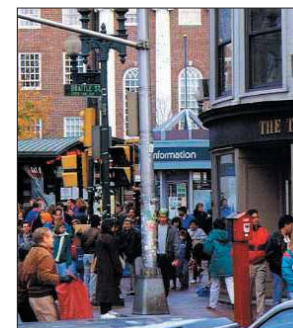
Respect for History, Heritage and Diversity



A Rich Mix of Uses



Leveraging Transit Investments



Streets for People



A Quality Public Realm

7 VISION & PLAN FRAMEWORK

This section of the report presents the community's vision for H Street and an introduction to the four focus areas around which the Plan's recommendations are organized.

7.1.Vision

Much of the discussion during public meetings and the design charrette focused on the corridor's colorful history and special qualities. While some shared their concern about current problems, many spoke of a brighter future. Diverse stakeholders talked about the importance of making H Street a safe and attractive place offering opportunities and activities for the whole neighborhood—young and old, families and singles, newcomers and old-timers. People spoke of the importance of supporting existing businesses, creating new opportunities for local entrepreneurs, and attracting new investment. They talked about the importance of protecting the street's character; promoting a unique 'sense of place,' and ensuring that new projects complement rather than detract from the area's best qualities.

Emerging from these discussions was a shared vision for the future of H Street—a vision of a great neighborhood shopping street, serving resident needs, providing connections to the larger City, and improving the livability of the surrounding community. Elements of the vision follow.

Land Use, Zoning & Development

Quality Design and Development. New buildings along the corridor should be designed in ways that respect the community's character; protect neighborhood livability and contribute to the making of active streets and public spaces. New development should be urban in character and use, bringing life to the street, complementing historic buildings and reinforcing a 'sense of place' for the corridor. Through the use of design guidelines and preservation incentives, the community can ensure that new investment is of the highest quality.

Respect for History, Heritage and Diversity. The history of H Street and the surrounding neighborhoods provides a strong foundation for the corridor's future. The Plan calls for uses that support the entire neighborhood, for the preservation and adaptive reuse of the corridor's most historic buildings, and for the introduction of new buildings that reinforce the street's uniqueness. To raise awareness of local history, the Plan calls for new programs and initiatives to interpret and celebrate history.

Retail Environment

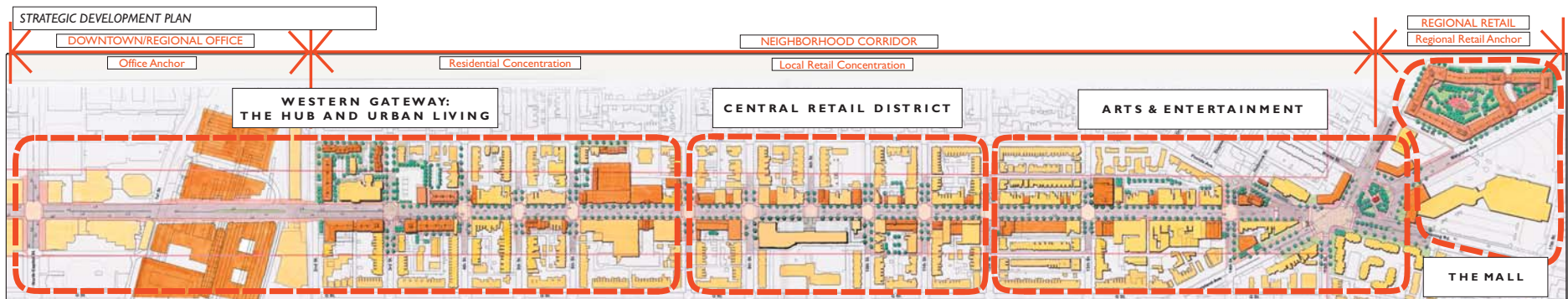
A Rich Mix of Uses. A revitalized H Street should be thought of as a string of unique but interrelated places, each

serving a range of neighborhood needs. The plan calls for the strengthening of existing businesses, and the attraction of new uses retail shops, restaurants, an improved library facility and housing opportunities. The plan envisions improved and new places to live, shop, eat, and be entertained, all of which will promote a safer and more attractive street environment and provide new opportunities for employment.

Transit, Traffic & Parking

Leveraging Transit Investments. The corridor's attractiveness is greatly enhanced by transit. The proximity of Metro Stations at Union Station and New York Avenue (planned), the presence of high capacity, high frequency bus lines, and plans for transit enhancements will strengthen connections between the neighborhood and the rest of the City. For the corridor, this improved connectivity can add new life to the street, increase pedestrian traffic, improve visibility for retailers, and temper demand for parking.

Streets for People. H Street should be designed to serve a number of travel modes—automobile, bus, transit, and pedestrian. The corridor should be accessible to residents and visitors as well as offer connections to amenities throughout the District. H Street should be designed to provide for safe, comfortable pedestrian movement as well as vehicular and transit circulation and parking. Improvements to the



Hopscotch Bridge and Eastern Gateway will further improve the corridor's walkability.

Public Realm

A Quality Public Realm. The quality of the public realm - streets, sidewalks and public-rights-of-way - has a powerful influence on the community's livability and economic vitality. To ensure success, the corridor's public spaces must be clean, safe, and attractive. A comprehensive program of streetscape improvements — curb, gutters, and sidewalks; decorative benches and streetlights; etc. — along with efforts to improve safety, fix-up storefronts, and attract new businesses and residences will contribute to the creation of a lively public environment.

7.2 Plan Framework

The concepts presented in the Strategic Development Plan are organized around a vision of the corridor as a special place in the City composed of four distinct but interrelated districts. While each district has its own unique qualities and opportunities, plan recommendations build towards a larger vision of the corridor as a safe, attractive, and interesting destination. Following this framework, the Plan's development and preservation recommendations are provided for the entire corridor as well as the four districts:

- Western Gateway: The Hub and Urban Living;
- the Central Retail District;
- Arts & Entertainment; and
- The Mall (Hechinger Mall/Formers Sears Sites).

For each of the districts, the Plan offers land use, preservation,

urban design, and development strategies, all of which are designed to contribute to the revitalization of the whole corridor.

The four districts were defined based on the findings of the conditions assessment and market analysis, and refined through discussions with community stakeholders. Factors such as walking distance, building and site vacancy, planned development, proximity to transit, and existing land use supported the team's decisions regarding boundaries and area-specific development strategies. *(Please note that the boundaries of the districts have been defined for planning purposes only—the boundaries between districts should be interpreted as transitions rather than hard edges.)*

An introduction to each focus area, including the rationale behind its definition, follows.

Western Gateway (North Capitol Street to 7th Street)

The Western gateway comprises two subdistricts: The Hub and Urban Living. The Western Gateway serves as the literal and symbolic bridge between H Street, North Capitol Street, Union Station, and destinations throughout the core of the City.

The Hub (North Capitol Street to 2nd Street). The area between North Capitol Street and 2nd Street NE will be developed significantly over the next few years. Union Station is a regional retail and transportation hub; walking distance from Union Station played a strong role in defining the limits of the subdistrict — the entire area is within a 10-12 minute walk of a Metro station, making development and adaptive reuse projects particularly attractive to residents, retailers

and office tenants seeking to benefit from regional transit accessibility. This subdistrict thus becomes critical transitional stretch to H Street at its western gateway.

The development of the Station Place project by Louis Dreyfus Properties and the Union Station Air Rights (Burnham Place) by Akridge Development will help to strengthen the connection between "Burnham Place," Station Place, Union Station and the H Street corridor; serve overall objectives of neighborhood revitalization; and enhance the opportunity to create a unique multi-modal center in the heart of the District. With entries directly on the bridge, active storefronts, pedestrian amenities, and improved access to Union Station, the Hopscotch Bridge can become an attractive extension of the corridor and a critical link to new uses.

Urban Living (2nd Street to 7th Street). New buildings between 2nd and 4th Streets can bring new life to this end of the corridor. Larger sites in single ownership along this stretch of H Street make higher density, mixed-use projects possible and allow a sensitive transition from developments in The Hub to lower scale buildings between 4th and 7th Streets. Mixed-use development at this end of the corridor reinforces the concept of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), the District's policy of focusing higher density mixed-use activity nodes close to major transportation hubs.

Central Retail District (7th Street to 12th Street)

Plans for the Central Retail District recognize this area's long history as the neighborhood's primary shopping destination. The area around the intersection of 8th and H Streets continues to benefit from its position as the corridor's 100%

corner’—the place where the transportation network best supports retail activity. Several transportation-related factors—the crossing of high volume bus lines, the passing of 24,000 vehicles per day, and foot traffic from the neighborhood—make this area attractive to a mix of local, regional, and national retailers. Recent building renovations and the low number vacant sites and storefronts are clear signs of the area’s viability as a retail destination.

Recommendations for the Central Retail District focus on leveraging existing assets—strong existing businesses, quality building stock, and excellent accessibility. Recommendations include initiatives to increase the competitiveness of existing businesses, attract new investment, encourage the renovation of storefronts and buildings, attract small office and apartment uses in upper story spaces, and encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized sites. Full-time on-street parking along with proposed public parking facilities at the district’s edges—at the redeveloped Murry’s and/or Auto Zone sites—will help support the district’s development.

Arts & Entertainment (12th Street to Bladensburg Avenue)

Building on the success of the H Street Playhouse, the presence of the R. L. Christian Library, plans for the Atlas Performing Arts Center’s rebirth, and the area’s historic

buildings, the Plan envisions the eastern end of the corridor developing as a destination for restaurants, cafes, galleries, small shops, and studio spaces serving the needs of theatergoers, the District arts community, and neighborhood residents. Extending from 12th Street to Bladensburg Road, this area will act as a magnet for arts and entertainment-related investments and a catalyst for the celebration of local heritage and culture. Improved library facilities are expected to play an important role in the area’s future—a new facility or greatly improved facility could provide a civic presence and an important educational and cultural anchor for neighborhood residents, especially children. The plan also calls for the redesign of the intersection of H and 15th Streets with Florida, Maryland, Bladensburg, and Benning Roads to improve conditions for pedestrians, calm traffic, and create a new space for a memorial or public art.

This area, in combination with the Central Retail District, will further improve the street’s image as a unique and interesting destination. Recommendations for this area include initiatives to attract new investment, encourage the renovation of storefronts and buildings, attract small office and apartment uses in upper story spaces, encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized sites. Additional parking is proposed on the vacant land behind the library and in the middle of the block behind the Atlas Performing Arts Center. Shared

parking agreements should be sought which would permit use of the Auto Zone and H Street Connection lots for evening and off-hour use.

The Mall (Hechinger Mall/Former Sears Sites) (Bladensburg Avenue to 17th Street)

Plans for the Hechinger Mall/Former Sears sites focus on the on-going improvement of Hechinger Mall and the attraction of new development on the former Sears site that serves neighborhood needs without competing against H Street retailers. The plan supports the development of this site for either residential or commercial use so long as the design is sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood and the urban context.

A second development scenario proposes 50 units per acre of residential development, in addition to retaining the Hechinger Mall and CVS gross floor areas, as well providing an additional 36,000 square feet of new retail use.

A third scenario proposes a mixed use development on the former Sears site. Some 63,000 square feet of retail is provided at ground level. Some 72,000 square feet of commercial/office use is provided, largely within a 6 story building. Some 130 residential units are provided in 3 to 7 story developments.